

In Support of House Bill 5321

Thank the committee for raising our bill.

When there are no regulations for large corporations it allows them to create a monopoly. We feel as small business owners that Belron International, has created a monopoly or at very least is attempting to create a monopoly in the auto glass industry with all the glass companies they own in the United States. The largest one being Safelite Auto Glass and its sister company, Safelite Solutions. Safelite Solutions is a third party administrator for insurance companies for filing auto glass claims. Safelite Solutions by their own words has 100 or more insurance companies under contract and 19 of them are within the top 20 in the country that write personal and commercial auto lines. The reason why this is so important for you to know is that Safelite Solutions only refers to one company which happens to be its sister company, Safelite Auto Glass. They are able to do this through creative and manipulative speeches to the insured in their attempt to steer work to their sister company. I have included an example how this is done from a recent customer.

They are going to claim that they do nothing wrong and that all of us small independent are feeling the pressure because of a down economy and that it is not their fault. The truth is by their practices they are restricting the way we can do business because most of the insurance companies that they are under contract with are demanding that their agents give the 800 number for Safelite Solutions and not independent glass companies. When we do get a customer, whether through yellow pages, walk in, etc, we still have to call the claim in to Safelite Solutions with the customer and stay on the phone because we risk the chance of them steering the job away from us and to Safelite Auto Glass. With all of this, it is still not a guarantee that they do not steal the job through their creative email marketing system.

They are going to say that if any action is taken by this committee in helping us it will cause them to reduce staff.. We are saying if no action is taken, we are going to lose our businesses. We are here to ask for your help. Thank you.

Rose Ann Santamaria

Feb. 25, 2012

To whom it may concern:

I recently experienced an auto glass emergency where my glass was badly damaged while driving.

I contacted my Allstate agent and was immediately referred to Safelite Auto Glass. I contacted them, arranged a time explaining I would need to take off from work as I would not be able to drive for a couple of hours. A date and time was arranged. I requested original manufactures equipment which I was told would be no problem.

On the day of service I received a call from the technician confirming the time. I asked if I was receiving original equipment glass and after a lot of back and forth was told I was not. That in fact after a certain year of the vehicle it was not an option but would cost an additional sum. When I asked what the extra cost was I was told no one knew.

I called my Allstate agent back and was referred to New England Auto Glass, a small locally owned company. The owner went above and beyond to make my experience pleasant. He got the glass I wanted and came to install it on a Sunday so I would not have to lose more work time.

Lesley Giovanelli

388 Racebrook Road

Orange, CT 06477

February 24, 2012

My name is, Andrew Harris, and my windshield broke on my truck. I called Liberty Mutual Glass claim unit was on the phone for 40 minutes and was told to wait until Monday 2/27/2012 to have my window fixed because no one was able to fix the windshield until then. This was on Friday, 2/25/2012, I told them that the car was not safe to drive. When I asked to speak with a manager, suddenly a place was found that could fix my windshield that day, which was Auto Glass of New England, and it was not the auto glass place that they were pushing me to which happened to be Safelite Auto Glass.

If you would like to speak to me about this, my cell is 203-907-6411.

Thank you.

Andrew R. Harris